

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/Project Name:	Montana Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council Meeting		
Date of Meeting:	February 15, 2013	Time:	10:00 a.m. – 2:35 p.m.
Minutes Prepared By:	Carol Bearden	Location:	Montana Department of Agriculture, Helena
1. Meeting Objective			
Business Meeting			
2. Attendees			
<p>Council Members: Scott Bockness, Montana Weed Control Association Representative; Dave Burch, MDA Representative; Ron de Yong, Governor's Representative; Kevin Chappell, State Agency Representative; Doug Dupuis (conference call), Tribal Representative; Lindy Garner, Federal Agency Representative; Jim Ghekiere, County Weed District Representative; Jerry Marks, MSU Extension Representative; Sarese Pankratz, Irrigation District Representative; Dave Schulz, Montana Association of Counties Representative; Tracy Sterling (conference call), MSU Agricultural Experiment Station Representative</p> <p>Council Members Not Attending: Celestine Duncan, Crop Protection Product Industry Representative</p> <p>Guests: Allison Begley, Shelby DeMars, Margie Edsall, Mike Miller, Bruce Rich, Jim Olivarez</p> <p>Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) Staff: Greg Ames, Carol Bearden, Cort Jensen, Craig McLane, Donna Rise</p>			
3. Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues			
Topic	Discussion		
Introductions, Minutes, Purpose of Council	<p>Ron de Yong called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and introductions were made. The minutes from the June 30, 2011 meeting were reviewed. Scott Bockness moved to approve the minutes as written and was seconded by Jim Ghekiere. The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Greg Ames reviewed the executive order establishing the Montana Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council, which was signed in July 2005. The purpose and duties of the council were discussed. Council terms automatically renew every two years unless changed by a subsequent executive order. Discussion followed regarding the differences, benefits, drawbacks, accomplishments, and activities of this council and its predecessor, the Noxious Weed Summit Steering Committee.</p> <p>A clarification of the Council's role with aquatics and other invasive species was suggested. Ron de Yong said he would like the next council meeting to include a work session with Governor Bullock to discuss legislation that passed, future legislation to help implement the State Noxious Weed Plan, and to develop a new executive order for the council.</p>		
Noxious Weed Program Budget	<p>Greg Ames advised the Council of recent reductions in funding from the US Forest Service and the state vehicle licensing for the MDA noxious weed program. As a result, weed program expenditures had been reduced by 33% over the past two years. Greg stated that fiscal year 2012 expenditures included 84% to grant awards, 5.8% for program expenses, 1.7% for council expenses, and 8.7% for administrative expenses.</p> <p>Efforts to secure other funding for the program were discussed, including Taylor Brown's LC 2027 to request General Funds for program expenses. SB 144 and the proposed resulting cuts to the MDA noxious weed program and staff were discussed.</p>		
Legislation Updates	Cort Jensen provided information on SB 144 and the amendments that have been made to the Bill. SB 301, to redefine and simplify the noncompliance portion of the county weed act was		

	discussed. Shelby DeMars advised the Council of amendments to SB 301 and said the hearing on the Bill was scheduled for Tuesday, February 19.
Blueprint for Improving AIS in Montana	The efforts of the past few years on the control, containment, and survey work related to aquatic invasive species were discussed by Ron de Yong. Ron said he was proud of what has been accomplished and advised the Council of Tim Baker's draft blueprint for improving efforts. Ron discussed the blueprint, which includes changes separating aquatic weed control from terrestrial weeds, shifting the control of flowering rush, Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM), and curlyleaf pondweed from MDA to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department (FWP). Discussion followed regarding the need for an aquatic invasive species trust fund and the efforts that will be made for a smooth transition with the proposed changes.
Aquatic Invasive Species Update	<p>Craig McLane summarized the 2012 MDA aquatic invasive species activities including watercraft inspection stations, management areas, locations of aquatic noxious weeds, and survey findings. Survey efforts have resulted in a baseline of aquatic invasive plant locations. MDA has been working with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) to pinpoint areas for survey and quantification in order to develop a management program. Craig provided the Council with copies of the 2012 MDA Annual Report on Aquatic Invasive Species, and the DNRC Aquatic Plant Management Grant Projects 2011-2012 Summary. Dave Schulz asked that Craig's report be presented at the Montana Association of Counties (MACo) annual meeting next year.</p> <p>Allison Begley provided a progress report for the FWP aquatic invasive species program describing their early detection and monitoring program, surveying and sampling methods, education efforts, and information on the 2012 watercraft inspection stations. Mike Miller asked that the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) continue to be included in information related to the inspection stations located on MDT land. Discussion followed on future aquatic invasive species (AIS) funding, and prioritization of efforts based on risk. Bruce Rich noted the EWM in Fort Peck Reservoir as a priority concern. Bruce asked that input and suggestions on how to better coordinate the AIS program be provided to Allison.</p> <p>Council members were encouraged to offer their input to Legislators. Ron de Yong invited FWP to attend the next council meeting and to stay actively involved with the Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council until an AIS council is developed.</p> <p>Greg Ames said that nine applications for aquatic invasive plant projects had been submitted to the Noxious Weed Trust Fund for funding consideration in early March. DNRC was asked to look at aquatic invasive species funding requests that have previously been directed to the Noxious Weed Trust Fund. Kevin Chappell will discuss this with Ray Beck.</p>
Noxious Weed Trust Fund Summary / State Weed Plan Update	<p>Dave Burch reported that 99 applications had been submitted for consideration at the Noxious Weed Trust Fund (NWTF) grant hearings scheduled for March 4-8 at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel in Helena. Dave discussed awards that have already been made including \$7,500 to each county and seven reservations, emergency flood and fire awards and \$10,000 to the Missouri River Watershed Coalition Program Coordination as specified in the MDA application to the US Forest Service.</p> <p>Dave advised the Council that four Noxious Weed Management Advisory Council members will reach the end of their three two-year terms on June 30. Nominations for qualified replacements have been received for the Western County Representative, and the Biological Research and Control Representative, however the Agricultural Crop Production and Herbicide Dealer / Applicator positions were proving more difficult to fill.</p> <p>Ron de Yong and Dave discussed the integrity and value of all the council members in addition to the dedication and time required to review NWTF grant applications and fulfill requirements of the council. Input was requested regarding extending or changing term limits, which could be completed in 60-90 days through the rule making process. Suggestions of three three-year terms or using the term renewal language of the Summit Advisory Council were discussed.</p> <p>An update of the 2008 Montana State Weed Management Plan was discussed. Dave Burch said</p>

	his original plan was to have MDA weed staff complete a draft update, which would be distributed for review and comments in June. However, in light of the proposed SB 144 weed staff reductions this would not be possible. Assistance by the Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council in completing the update was discussed. Dave Schulz suggested further discussion at the next meeting and input from Governor Bullock.			
Other Business, Public Comment	MDA weed program and staff reductions resulting from SB 144 amendments were reviewed. Options to cut costs and benefits of county requested MDA programs were discussed. Questions regarding letters from the Governor's office that were received by council members regarding re-application to the council were discussed. Ron de Yong asked for public comment. None was heard.			
Next Meeting Date and Agenda	Ron de Yong suggested that Council's next meeting be held when the session concludes and that Governor Bullock be asked to join the meeting. May 10 or 17 were selected as possible meeting dates. Agenda Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Noxious Weed Plan Update• Historical focus on noxious weeds• Effects of Legislation• Future legislation (Governor's budget)• Biocontrol – Corvallis Experiment Station• Education and Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage Programs• New executive order for Council• Governor interaction with Federal agencies (accomplishments, funding) Ron asked that other topics be submitted as the session continues.			
Adjourn	The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.			
4. Action Items				
Action		Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Request that Craig McLane's aquatic invasive species presentation be given at the 2014 Montana Association of Counties (MACo) annual meeting.			
2	DNRC was asked to look at aquatic invasive species funding requests that have previously been directed to the Noxious Weed Trust Fund. Kevin Chappell will discuss this with Ray Beck.	Kevin Chappell		
3	Advise Council of legislative hearings related to noxious weeds.	MDA Staff		